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ABSTRACT

This report describes Oklahoma State University's (OSU's) Graduate Plan for Enhancing Diversity (GPED), a program designed to increase the number of minority group graduate students at OSU. GPED goals are: the population of OSU graduate students pursuing degrees will reflect the demographics of the state population by the year 2004; and the population of OSU graduate students receiving degrees will reflect the demographics of the state population by the year 2006. The report describes innovative recruitment and retention activities including development of an alliance with other institutions to determine successful recruitment strategies; development of OSU's positive image as an institution responsive to the contributions of minority graduate students, faculty, and staff; implementation of recruitment strategies that will increase minority enrollment in OSU graduate programs; and facilitation of the matriculation process to provide support to minority students early in the recruitment process. Measures of GPED program success include an increase of 73 percent (from 48 to 83) in the number of minority students receiving graduate degrees from 1994 to 1996-97 and an overall increase of 16 percent (from 732 to 849) in minority graduate enrollment over that same period. Also provided are budget information, a summary of internal evaluation efforts, and a summary of data on minority populations served. Graphs showing enrollment trends are appended. (DB)

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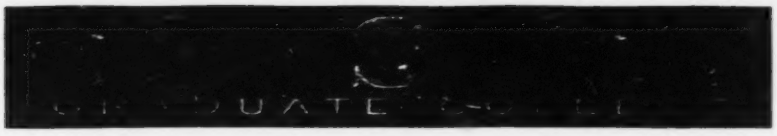

ED 426 650

Enhancing Diversity in Graduate Education

Graduate Plan for Enhancing Diversity
Oklahoma State University

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Prepared for the
Council of Graduate Schools
Peterson's Award Competition
by Molly Tovar, Ed.D.
Director, Student Academic Services

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Executive Summary

The Graduate Plan for Enhancing Diversity: A Comprehensive Approach for the Inclusion of Minorities in Graduate Programs *(Initiated 1995).*

Mission Statement

Many of our ethnic minority students are motivated by a commitment, not only to the profession, but to the application of their chosen profession in a way that will assist individuals with the same culture. Understanding this, then, becomes vital to the development of a research and an academic environment which applies the student's chosen profession within the context of his or her cultural experiences.

The Graduate Plan for Enhancing Diversity has as a foundation a goal of increasing the diverse mixture of students, faculty, and administrators. It should also guide the development of research programs of significance to ethnic minorities. To achieve equity, the university must also strive to reflect the diversity of the communities with which it is involved.

An institutional commitment to diversity must include equity of access and equity of participation for ethnic minority groups. Beyond equity, however, the university must recruit outstanding minority students. Once admitted, these students should have access to 1) knowledgeable and caring faculty mentors including minority members, 2) excellent research capable of supporting research into questions and issues involving minority peoples, and 3) broad financial and student support services. This type of support will allow the minority graduate student to transcend merely equitable education, and achieve excellence.

The activities necessary to implement a comprehensive plan can be divided into two categories: 1) Recruitment Strategies and 2) Retention Strategies. First order changes should seek to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of what is currently being done across the OSU campus. Second order changes should seek to alter the fundamental ways in which organizations are put together (Fullan, 1991). To be successful the Graduate Plan for Enhancing Diversity (GPED) must move along both tracks. The GPED will present the strategies from both a long and short term perspective. Necessarily, it takes longer to effect institutional and organizational changes, therefore, this will be discussed in the framework of a long term plan.

Much of the early research conducted to develop long term strategies included a study of the current environment at OSU with regard to ethnic minorities. Also studied were certain institutional commitments of resources and student support services, which tend to have a direct bearing on the recruitment and retention of a diverse student population and, consequently, on the development of a diverse alumni.

Purpose

The purpose of GPED reflects the university commitment to equity. The purpose of GPED is: To attain and maintain student enrollments in the OSU Graduate College at a level of parity with the demographics of the state population. In a time of increasing minority participation in all areas of society, the comprehensive land grant university must reflect the culture in which it functions.

Goals

The goals of the Graduate Plan to Enhance Diversity are:

1. By the year 2004 the population of graduate students pursuing graduate degrees at OSU will have reached a level of parity with the ethnic proportions of the State of Oklahoma. (Recruitment)
2. By the year 2006 the population proportion of graduate students obtaining graduate degrees at OSU will have reached a level of parity with the ethnic proportions of the State of Oklahoma. (Retention)

Evaluation

The Director of Student Academic Services for the Graduate College and the GPED Task Force will be responsible for assessing, developing, implementing, and monitoring GPED goals to improve and promote educational equity and ethnic diversity at the graduate level. The GPED will include an ongoing assessment and evaluation process which will provide information relevant to the contributions, attitudes, observations, and perceptions of targeted groups. This process will include further analysis of existing policies and the perceptions of the academic community with respect to issues significant to the minority groups the university seeks to attract. Each of the GPED goals will undergo a formal evaluation annually. The evaluation will be based on external reviews, student opinion polls, case studies, archival review, and other relevant research and/or assessment that might prove useful in the evaluation of the GPED. An annual report will be presented to the Dean of the Graduate College by the Director of Student Academic Services for the Graduate College for the purpose of disseminating the results to the OSU administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Graduate Program for Enhancing Diversity (GPED) Description

Introduction

As of July 1997, the Graduate Plan to Enhance Diversity (GPED) program has been in operation for two years. The first year focused on the development of the plan, including the piloting of some of the activities. By 1997, the increase in OSU's recruitment and retention of minority students is apparent and is a direct result of the GPED program with cooperation from departmental faculty and support from central administration. The retention of minority students from 1994-95 to 1996-97 has increased dramatically as measured by the increase from 48 to 83 (a 73% increase) in the number of degrees awarded to minority students. This has far exceeded expectations. Our recruitment efforts and networks have also yielded an increase in enrollment from 732 in 1994-95 to 849 in 1996-97 (a 16% increase), which is also very promising. However, statistics are only one visible sign of the overwhelming response and commitment that is occurring across the campus and the United States. Participation of administrators, faculty and staff in recruitment and retention efforts has more than doubled. Faculty members from a variety of departments are participating in a vast majority of recruiting trips. Participation in minority mentoring programs, campus events, luncheons, and celebrations has significantly increased as well. External funding has already been secured to support our efforts. In the following sections, a summary of activities and accomplishments achieved this year are highlighted. Detailed outlines follow in the appendices.

Innovative Recruitment and Retention Activities

Recruitment Activities and Achievements

The GPED program has been actively engaged in numerous exciting activities to enhance the recruitment of minority graduate students. Although the complete list of activities is exhaustive, a few are highlighted here. The program's activities not only worked to increase the number of minority graduate students enrolling at OSU in 1996-97, but also fostered a precedence for recruitment activities and inter-institutional alliances in accordance with the program's long term goals.

Objective 1.1: Develop an alliance with other institutions of higher education to determine successful strategies for the recruitment of minorities.

- Negotiated with Native American Trio coordinator at East Central University to develop cooperative programs (5/97).
- Contacted the Graduate Feeder Scholar Program to increase black students in graduate education at Florida A&M University and discussed a partnership with them. (8/96)
- Finalized a cooperative arrangement with Langston University (HBCU) which resulted in inviting their Honors students to present at OSU Graduate College's Research Symposium and participate in OSU's Leadership Speaker Series (12/96).
- Attended and became an active member in the Big 12 Graduate Minority Council meeting and assumed responsibility of the doctoral name exchange program for the Big 12 as well as creating a database for a faculty name exchange (8/96).

Objective 1.2: Identify and further develop OSU's positive image as a quality institution responsive to the cultural contributions of minority graduate students, faculty and staff.

- Sponsored the transportation cost for an OSU representative to the 14th Annual United States Hispanic Leadership Conference in Chicago. Several OSU undergraduate Hispanic students attended. (10/96)
- Presented the GPED program at national conferences such as the 9th Annual National Race and Ethnicity Conference in Florida.
- Prepared and submitted proposal to the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities and the Native American Retention Conference in Arizona for presentation of the GPED project (4/97).
- Submitted articles to state and local newspapers on a monthly basis.
- Involvement in National Hispanic Heritage Month, OSU Native American Pow-Wow, Native American Art Show, and Vietnamese Undergraduate Visitation Day.

Objective 1.3: Implement recruitment strategies that will increase minority enrollment in OSU graduate programs.

- Secured external funding of $210,000 for the American Indians Into Psychology Grant Program (7/97).
- Developed a Minority Teaching Assistantship Program which is supported by university administration ($50,000) with an end result of 14 new minority graduate students recruited in different departments.
- External funding from the OSRHE in the amount of $60,000 to support a Graduate College proposal to conduct a summer academy for 40 junior high ethnic minority students interested in science and mathematics.

- Minority recruiting trips to Mississippi State University, East Central University, Northeastern Oklahoma State University, University of Texas-San Antonio, Trinity University, Texas Southern University, Hispanic Graduate School Fair, Florida A&M, Southwest Texas State University, Loyola University, Tulane University, Xavier University, Our Lady of the Lake, Prairie View A&M University, and Langston University. (13 universities in 5 states--MS, TX, LA, OK, FL; 1 Grad school fair)
- Sponsored the Native American Visitation Day and invited three universities which have high Native American student enrollment to attend. (9/96)

Objective I.4: Facilitate the matriculation process to develop a system that will provide support and communication to the minority student earlier in the recruitment process.

- Participated in the Eighth Annual OSU Minority Career Fair (1/97).
- Held informational sessions for current undergraduates both at OSU and at OU. Presentations included: "Finding Funds for Graduate School to help graduate students obtain scholarships and fellowships information," "How to Write a Vitae/Resume," and "How to Apply to Graduate School Guide."

Summary

By 1997, the GPED program has increased the activity of the Oklahoma State University Graduate College in its recruitment of ethnic minority students. Involved in a wide variety of activities, the program promoted OSU's commitment to ensuring the success of its minority students, recruited minority graduate students at thirteen universities in five states, explored alliances with six other institutions of Higher Education (East Central University, Langston University, Prairie View A&M University, Northeastern Oklahoma State University, Our Lady of the Lake, and Florida A&M University), created an innovative Minority Teaching Assistantship Program, secured external funding through the American Indians into Psychology Program and the Oklahoma Principals' Science Scholars, and proactively educated and supported minority students early in the recruitment process through informational sessions on applying to graduate schools and fellowships. Additionally, the GPED program presented its plan and goals to seven distinct groups. Through dedication to the fulfillment of its goals, the GPED program has become a highly visible aspect of the Graduate College working not only with university faculty, administration and students, but with consortiums (such as GEM), other institutions of Higher Education, and elementary and secondary schools.

Retention Activities and Achievements

In addition to its committed involvement in enhancing the recruitment of minority graduate students at Oklahoma State University, the Graduate Plan for Enhancing Diversity provides continued support for minority graduate students through it retention efforts. The GPED program, in striving to retain minority graduate students, participates in a diverse number of activities. Only a select few are highlighted here.

Objective 2.1: Increase satisfaction with the graduate experience by developing university and departmental environments which is nurturing and supportive.

- Attended the Hispanic Faculty and Staff meetings; the Native American Faculty and Staff meetings; Graduate Student Association and participated in the minority component of the Oklahoma State University research symposium (3/97).
- Designed and displayed culturally relevant programs and information in the display case outside the Graduate College to engender a culturally sensitive and aware environment.

Summary

The retention activities of the GPED program have proven highly successful in their first year. In encouraging its minority graduate students to obtain their degrees, the GPED sponsored seminars on funding and resume writing, attended programs to showcase talented minority students, cooperated with faculty, staff, and students to improve the experiences of minority graduate students, organized university wide research symposia, and facilitated awareness of programs designed to assist minority graduate students. The GPED worked closely with previously existing on-campus organizations, such as the Minority Graduate Student Association, the Multicultural Development Assessment Center, the Department of Applied Behavioral Studies, and the Psychology Diversified Students Program, to enrich the experiences of minority graduate students. The program has worked to facilitate institutional changes in both the short and the long term.

Measures of Success

Visible signs of the success of the GPED program are apparent throughout its activities and achievements. As previously mentioned, the number of minority students receiving graduate degrees at OSU increased from 48 to 83 (a 73% increase) from 1994-95 to 1996-97. During this same time, minority graduate enrollment rose from 732 to 849 (representing a 16% increase). However, the effect in the Oklahoma State community has been most apparent through the increase in the involvement of faculty, staff, administration, and students in multicultural activities. Faculty participated in 14 minority recruitment trips across five states in 1996-97. Additionally, faculty, staff, administration, and students attended 17 multicultural events. The increased active involvement of these groups indicates the widespread support for diversity across the OSU campus in accordance with the objectives of the GPED plan. Publicity of OSU's commitment to the GPED plan was also widespread, with 45 articles published in local and state newspapers.

Operating Costs

One of the most viable aspects of the GPED plan is its innovative ability to accrue funds without straining university resources. The following budget details the operating costs of the GPED plan:

General Needs.

Financial support for the Graduate Plan for Enhancing Diversity is needed in four general categories:

- Travel, production of literature, communication, and general office expenses.
- Staff support.
- Waivers of in-state tuition.
- Support for graduate assistants.

Graduate College Reallocation.

The Graduate College has made a commitment to reallocate its internal resources as much as is possible to support the Diversity Plan.

- Existing efforts in recruiting will be redirected to target minority recruitment. A greater emphasis will be placed on minority institutions when making recruiting trips.
- Staff time is being reallocated to minority recruitment and retention programs. This is made possible by automation of current processes and reorganization of office procedures.
- A portion of the in-state tuition waiver budget is being redirected so that it will specifically target support for minority students.

Commitments from the University.

To completely implement the Diversity Plan, the Graduate College will need additional support from the University.

- Additional funding has been committed for recruiting trips and the development of literature.
- No further staff support was requested.
- More funds were granted for in-state tuition waivers targeted solely for minority students.
- Funds were allocated for graduate assistantships to support minority students. These funds were used to pay half of graduate assistants' stipends, if the departments pay the other half.

Annual Budget

		FY 97	FY 98	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02
Literature, Travel, Communication, Maintenance	Reallocation	$35,000	$35,000	$35,000	$35,000	$35,000	$35,000
	Need from OSU	0	$45,000	$45,000	$45,000	$45,000	$45,000
Staff Support	Reallocation	$73,000	$73,000	$73,000	$73,000	$73,000	$73,000
	Need from OSU	0	0	0	0	0	0
In-State Tuition Waivers	Reallocation	$75,000	$150,000	$150,000	$150,000	$150,000	$150,000
	Need from OSU	0	$50,000	$75,000	$100,000	$100,000	$100,000
Department Stipend Support	Reallocation	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Need from OSU	0	$50,000	$100,000	$150,000	$200,000	$250,000

In 1996-97, the GPED program worked to find additional external funding. Several sources were located and will contribute to the program in the years to come.

Internal Evaluation

The members of the committee feel that minority recruitment and retention efforts will only be successful if the entire university community feels accountable for this program. Although direct accountability for GPED's success resides with the Director of Student Services for the Graduate College, all other areas of administration within the Graduate College and the university at large understand the importance of the program's success. Listed below are methods that are used to monitor the degree in which those responsible for the implementation of the program have been successful.

- An ongoing review of University policies, the plan and its strategies, will be conducted periodically and on an annual basis. This review will provide insight into the policies and strategies that may need revision or modification. The results will be reported to the OSU administration by the Director of Student Academic Services for the purpose of implementing change strategies.
- The Director of Student Academic Services will supervise the annual assessment of the GPED plan and the programs associated with this plan. The purpose of this assessment is to ascertain accomplishments and problems associated with the plans implementation. This assessment will include, but is not limited to, collecting and analyzing university student data; conducting survey research for the purpose of measuring levels of satisfaction within areas of the university that impact the success of minority students; and conducting interviews and focus groups to determine if the minority student's experience at OSU is developmental in nature and conducive to academic success.
- An annual collection of data from various departmental minority programs for the purpose of providing a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the university efforts on minority recruitment and retention will be conducted.
- An active involvement of the GPED committee members is maintained. This provides for fresh and current input from the various entities involved in this effort. It also provides a broad based level of accountability for those directly administering the program.
- An annual report will be prepared and submitted to the Oklahoma State University President outlining progress of the plan and activities that were completed in an effort to obtain the goals as outlined in the plan.

INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT

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August 28, 1997

CGS/Peterson's Award
Council of Graduate Schools
One Dupont Circle, Suite 430
Washington, DC 20036

To Whom It May Concern:

In his December 15, 1994 inaugural remarks to faculty, staff and students at Oklahoma State University, President James E. Halligan stressed the need for this land-grant institution to reflect the culture within which it functions. "We will embrace the love of learning, the respect for ideas, the need for diversity, and the vitality associated with positive change, which are essential to the welfare of the university."

In keeping with the spirit of land-grant legislation and our desire to be recognized as the "university of choice" in Oklahoma, OSU is committed to minority graduate education. In 1996, the Graduate College implemented a new Graduate Plan for Enhancing Diversity which focuses on the goal of increasing the diverse mixture of students, faculty, and administrators and also helps guide the development of research programs of interest to and having significance for ethnic minorities.

Oklahoma State University's commitment to diversity includes providing both equity of access and equity of participation for ethnic minority groups. Beyond our commitment to equity, OSU makes every effort to recruit outstanding minority students. Once admitted, these students are provided support and services within a learning environment which allows them to transcend merely equitable education and achieve excellence in their chosen fields.

Oklahoma State University's commitment to minority graduate education is reflected in the stated purpose of the Graduate Plan for Enhancing Diversity: "...to attain and maintain student enrollments in the OSU Graduate College at a level of parity with the demographics of the state population."

Sincerely,

Marvin S. Keener
Executive Vice President

MSK:mt

Bringing Dreams to Life

Minority Populations Served

The Student Pool

Several sources which make up the student pool were reviewed. These areas included the general population, the high-school population and Oklahoma universities granting undergraduate degrees.

Oklahoma Population

Recent literature predicts that the birth rate of Anglo-Americans has slowed to the degree that in fewer than three decades, whites will make up only 53% of the national population. Twenty three percent of U.S. citizens are predicted to be Hispanic, 20% African-American, and 4% Asian-American, Native American, or Pacific Islanders (Walker, 1993). Information from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census (1990) data confirms this trend in Oklahoma. Minorities represent 19% of the total population of the state of Oklahoma.

American Indians are the single largest minority group, representing 7.9% of the total population of the State. In descending order, the following ethnic minority groups are represented as follows: African American 7.3%, Hispanic 2.7%, and Asian American 1.1%. A significant number of Oklahomans will attend graduate school in their home state, and this future student pool will most likely continue to grow, both in first-time graduate students and those individuals returning for additional training. This hypothesis is supported by Olson (1992) that suggested that geographic location is the most frequently given reason by students for consideration of a particular university.

Oklahoma High Schools

Oklahoma public school enrollment rose by 9,071 students in 1992, according to the State School Superintendent, Sandy Garret. More than 70% of the new students are from minority groups. Additionally, the proportions of ethnic minorities that are seniors in Oklahoma high schools is greater than the overall state minority proportions. Of the Oklahoma high school seniors 73.7% are white, 8.6% are African American, 13.6% are Native American, 2.5% Hispanic, and 1.6% Asian Americans. These proportions indicate that the percentage of potential minority college students is greater than the overall minority population of the state. The total high school senior minority percentage is 26.3% while the overall state minority percentage is 19%.

Oklahoma Baccalaureate Degree Recipients

One of the more obvious pools of potential graduate students is from those earning baccalaureate degrees from Oklahoma colleges and universities. Enlarging the pool of eligible graduate students is long term strategy that can address the problem of the underrepresentation of minority students (ACE, 1989). For this reason it is important to understand how the OSU graduate student population compares to the population of baccalaureate degree recipients in proportions of ethnic minority students.

Oklahoma colleges and universities conferred a total of 14,032 baccalaureate degrees to domestic students in the 1993-94 academic year. Of those degrees 12,158 were conferred by public universities and 1,874 were conferred by private colleges and universities. The ethnic percentages for the domestic baccalaureate degree recipients were 84.9% white, 5.3% African-American, 6.6% Native American, 1.4% Hispanic, and 1.9% Asian Americans. The proportions of ethnic minorities receiving the baccalaureate degree was greatest in the four year public institutions (Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, May, 1995).

Over the past few years, OSU degrees conferred to Minority Graduate Students have increased 73% from 1994 to 1997 of the domestic doctoral and masters student population. Enrollment of new minority graduate students increased 36% during the same period. The total graduate enrollment of minority students increased16% during the four year period. The table below summarizes minority graduate students enrolled at OSU over the past years.

Student Enrollment Statistics

	1994-95	1996-97	Increase (%)
Degrees conferred to Minority Graduate Students	48	83	+35 (73%)
Enrollment of New Minority Graduate Students	160	217	+57 (36%)
Total Graduate Enrollment of Minority Students	732	849	+117 (16%)

Appendices indlude charts which depicts results of degrees conferred. New minority graduate enrollment and total graduate enrollment.

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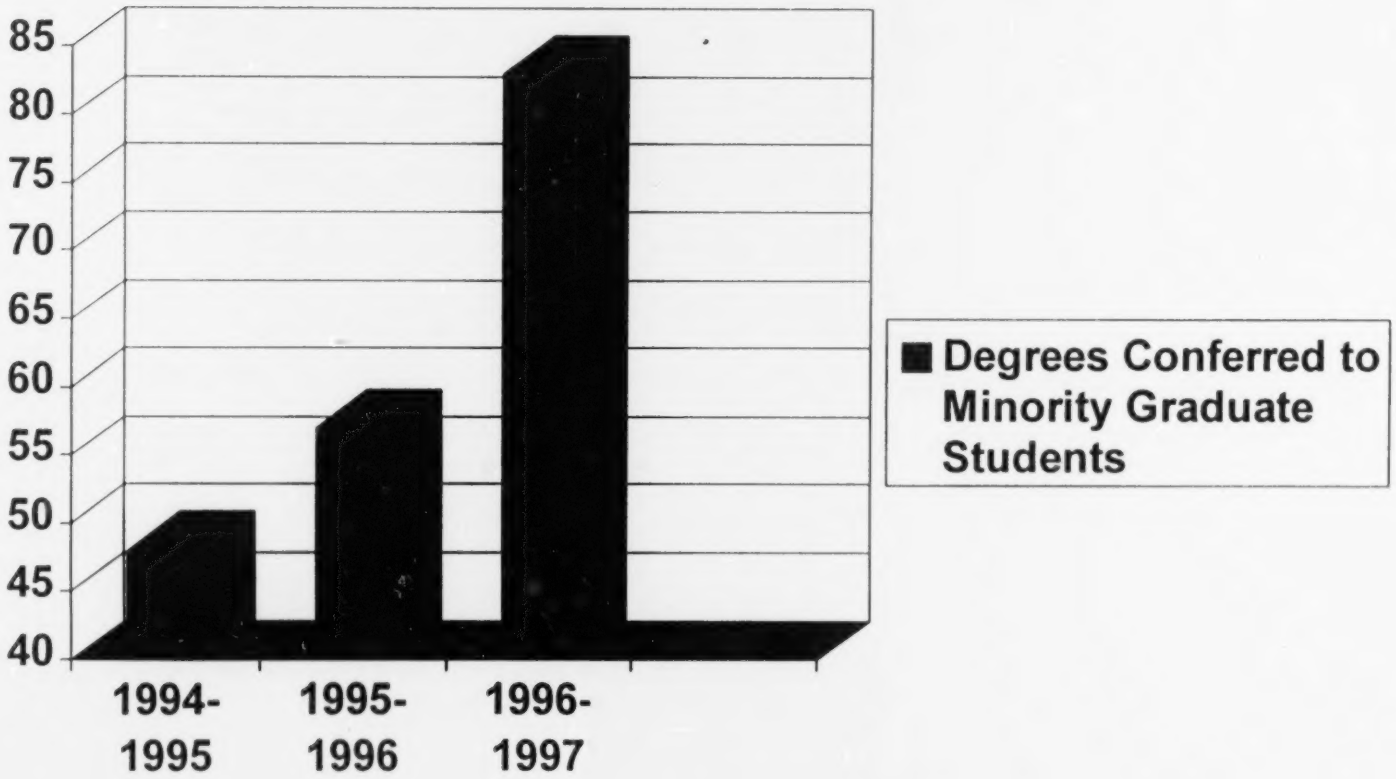
Appendices

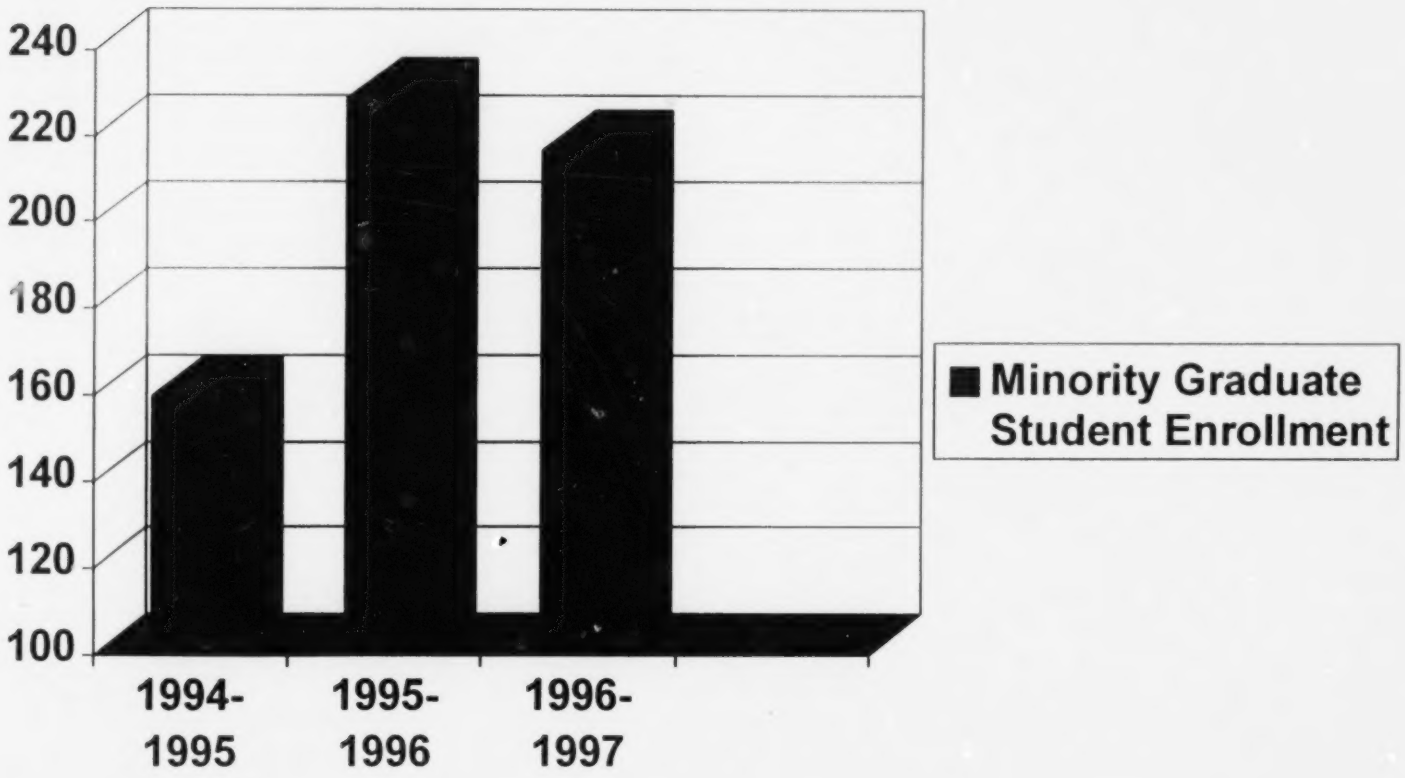
Oklahoma State University

Degrees Conferred to Minority Graduate Students



Oklahoma State University

Enrollment of New Minority Graduate Students



Oklahoma State University

Total Graduate Enrollment of Minority Students